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FLOOR DEBATE

March 4, 2004

LR 209

CLERK: Mr. President, the next amendment is AM2822 offered by Senator Landis. (Legislative Journal page 779.)

SENATOR VRTISKA: Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you. Senator Vrtiska, members of the Legislature, Senator Janssen ably reminded us of the terms of the committee amendment a moment ago and he did make reference to the phrase "for competitive grants" with respect to the money given to the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund. However, upon pretty direct communication with the executive branch, the Governor and the executive branch was interested in seeing to it that the environmental money remained at the discretion of the Legislature, as we so directed. Now the purpose has to be the environment and statutorily we have designated the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund to be the recipient of that money. So those two things aren't changed. But what this section does is to strike the reference to competitive grants and to indicate that 44.5 percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer, because the first money into the fund is this initial transfer that goes to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund, shall be used for education as the Legislature may direct. If the Nebraska State Fair ceases operation, 10 percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance shall be transferred to the General Fund. So what this amendment does is to strike the reference to competitive grants and to leave us with the power to direct, as we wish, the environmental part of the lottery distribution. It also identifies that 44.5 percent of the money shall be used for education as the Legislature may direct, so that we reenforce that phrase for the direction of the money, and also for the fact that education is one of the two primary beneficiaries of this money. And that, lastly, we take care of the situation that would occur if the State Fair were to go bankrupt or to cease operations even though this constitutional provision was in effect. The answer is that the 10 percent that had hitherto been going to the State Fair fund, would revert to the General Fund. This places the bill in...or places, rather, the committee amendment into form that I would like as the principal introducer to have before the body, and